

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

GABRIELLA BASS,

Plaintiff,

- against -

AOL INC.

Defendant.

Docket No. 1:17-cv-5243

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Gabriella Bass (“Bass” or “Plaintiff”) by and through her undersigned counsel, as and for his Complaint against Defendant AOL Inc., (“Aol” or “Defendant”) hereby alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant’s unauthorized reproduction and public display of an iconic copyrighted photograph of the fearless girl sculpture in Wall Street owned and registered by Bass, a New York based photojournalist. Accordingly, Bass seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides in and/or transacting doing business in New York and is registered to do business in the State of New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

PARTIES

5. Bass is a professional photojournalist having a usual place of business at 44 St. Nicholas Avenue, Apt. 3R, Brooklyn, New York, 11237.

6. Upon information and belief, Aol is a foreign business corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware, with a place of business at 770 Broadway, New York, New York 10003. Upon information and belief, Aol is registered with the New York Department of State, Division of Corporations to do business in the State of New York. At all times material hereto, Aol has owned and operated a website at the URL: www.Wow.com (the “Website”).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Background and Plaintiff’s Ownership of the Photograph

7. Bass photographed the iconic fearless girl sculpture in Wall Street (the “Photograph”). A true and correct copy of the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. Bass is the author of the Photograph and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photograph, including the copyright thereto.

9. The Photograph was registered with United States Copyright Office and was given Copyright Registration Number VA 2-055-082.

B. Defendant’s Infringing Activities

10. Upon information and belief, on or about May 30, 2017 Aol ran an article on the Website entitled *Artist Adds Urinating Pug Statue To Wall Street's Fearless Girl*. See http://www.wow.com/article/3_PT8G/22117519. The article prominently featured the Photograph. A true and correct copy of the article with the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

11. Aol did not license the Photograph from Plaintiff for its article, nor did Aol have Plaintiff's permission or consent to publish the Photograph on its Website.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF
(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST AOL)
(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)

12. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-11 above.

13. Aol infringed Plaintiff's copyright in the Photograph by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photograph on the Website. Aol is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photograph.

14. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

15. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Aol have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff's rights.

16. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

17. Alternatively, Plaintiff is entitled to statutory damages up to \$150,000 per work infringed for Defendant's willful infringement of the Photograph, pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(c).

18. Plaintiff further is entitled to her attorney's fees and full costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant Aol be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photograph in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. Plaintiff be awarded either: a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photograph; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per copyrighted work infringed pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
3. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
4. That Plaintiff be awarded her costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;
5. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
6. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York
July 12, 2017

LIEBOWITZ LAW FIRM, PLLC

By: /s/Richard Liebowitz

Richard P. Liebowitz

11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 305

Valley Stream, NY 11580

Tel: (516) 233-1660

RL@LiebowitzLawFirm.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff Gabriella Bass